

The Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) is designed to provide resources for the City's long-term capital needs, including repair and construction of sewers, streets, parks, city buildings, housing and economic development.

The budget is comprised of a variety of state, federal and local funding sources. Historically, about 45% of the funding has come from state and federal grants and aids. The remaining 55% of local funding has been largely comprised of general obligation Capital Improvement Bonds. Other local sources have included assessments, fees, revenue bonds, General Fund transfers, Metropolitan Council funds, County Aid, and some private dollars.

The CIB budget is approved by the Mayor and City Council annually. It is prepared on a bi-annual basis through the Unified Capital Improvement Program and Budget Process (commonly referred to as the "CIB Process"). This is a unique, nationally-recognized effort to develop capital improvement priorities for the City of Saint Paul. Established over three decades ago, the process is based on the belief that citizen participation is critical in identifying and prioritizing the City's capital needs. Participating organizations include district planning councils, civic associations, community development groups, business organizations and City departments.

In January of each odd calendar year, citizen organizations and City departments prepare proposals for capital projects that encompass a wide range of public improvements. Typical proposals have requested improvements in streets, sewers, bridges, libraries, recreation centers, playground equipment, traffic flow and other public facilities and infrastructure. All improvements must have a useful life of at least 10 years.

Organizations may submit proposals individually, in conjunction with other neighborhood groups, or jointly with City departments. Once all project proposals are received, City department staff prepare cost estimates and identify available financing for each project.

In Spring, special task forces comprised of representatives from each of the 17 citizen participation districts begin to review the project proposals. Projects are grouped by type, then reviewed and rated by one of the three task forces: "Community Facilities", "Streets and Utilities" and "Residential and Economic Development." When project review is completed, the task forces forward their project recommendations to the Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) Committee that match the top-ranked proposals with available financing. By late June, the CIB Committee forwards to the Mayor recommended capital improvement budgets for the following two fiscal years. The Mayor presents his proposed capital (and operating) budgets to the City Council and citizens in mid-August.

During the fall, the City Council reviews the Mayor's proposed budgets and holds public hearings. In mid December, the Council adopts a final capital improvement budget for the next fiscal year and approves a tentative budget for the year after.

In even years, the tentative budget for the second year of the biennium generally is recommended by the CIB Committee, proposed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. Revisions to the tentative budget are allowed for projects that satisfy one of three conditions: 1) elimination of a life/safety hazard; 2) leverage of non-city funding; or 3) coordination with other projects.